



**THREE**  
minutes with ...



**CLIFF GALLI**

Artist and rancher

Cliff Galli, 67, of Joseph may be relatively new to Wallowa County, but in many ways, he's cut from the same cloth as county ranchers. He and wife Pam moved to Joseph from Riggins, Idaho, where he ran 300 mother cows (and additional bulls and replacement heifers) on 3,000 acres.

Now, they're down to 100 mother cows on 500 acres of the old Dobbin Ranch in Joseph in their "retirement."

They arrived in Joseph in 2014 along with the youngest of the blended family of four children, Sunny Galli, who graduated from Enterprise High in 2017 and is now at the University of Idaho.

Cliff Galli is an artist in addition to a cattleman and has worked in many mediums, including painting and ceramic work. You can find his work at [fineartamerica.com](http://fineartamerica.com).

He graduated from high school in Corte Madera, Calif., in 1968 and went directly into the army and then the National Guard. He attended Humbolt State University, majoring in art after his discharge, and found himself with a different viewpoint on a lot of things — becoming an antiwar activist, an artist and a "back to the land" enthusiast.

It was the back to the land enthusiasm that led him into ranching, which he said got harder due to wolf pressure. There is no compensation program for ranchers who lose cattle to wolves in Idaho, and wolf pressure also brings elk herds down to lower altitudes where the elk graze down summer pastures, making them unavailable for cattle, he said.

"Elk, 300 head of elk, would winter with us, and they'd bring the wolves with them," he said. "I have nothing against wolves, but it got to where you couldn't live with them."

He and wife, Pam, are focused on conservation of the Dobbins property. They are part of the Conservation Stewardship Program with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and have just begun a five-year program. Galli is supporting Nez Perce efforts to bring beaver back to sections of Prairie Creek on his ranch, which is on the Nez Perce Trail.

"I don't actually work toward (their goals)," he said. "Nez Perce are on their own timeline. I just let them know we are

open if they want to do (projects or campouts) on the land."

**Q. Why move to Wallowa County?**

**A.** When I was ranching in Riggins I'd sit on top of the Seven Devils and look across toward Oregon and say, 'There's where I'm going to go (when I retire).' There were a lot of things about government in Idaho I didn't like, and I didn't think my son would get the quality of education I wanted him to have if we stayed in Idaho. Moving to Wallowa County was a real upgrade from what we had. I was getting older, and I wanted to be a little more civilized. When you live in the wilderness, it's a different deal. You go without stuff and you find out what the differences are. (For instance) medical care here is 10 times better than I thought it was. This clinic and this hospital are exemplary.

**Q. What has Wallowa County taught you?**

**A.** It's teaching me about farming in a short growing season. Also, that a good environment makes good children. All the community around here, that I've seen, has helped to raise the children that are here. Kids around here are a pretty clean bunch of kids. Also, you can trust people — you can leave your keys in the car. I don't want to live somewhere where you have to lock everything. What kind of "wealth" is that?

**Q. What is the first book you remember checking out of the library, and what book can you recommend that you have read recently?**

**A.** It was one of these books on elements and it was on gold. I was maybe seven. A book I can recommend is by Alvin Josephy: "Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest" (available at The Bookloft). I'm a history freak.



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